

specification or the drawings. Claim 1 has been canceled, thus rendering this objection moot.

To the extent this objection also pertains to pending claim 34, Applicant respectfully notes that Figure 12 of the as-filed application shows a mating portion of the contact (103) as extending horizontally from the bend (131) and terminating as the mounting tab (129).

The drawings have been objected to because the reference numeral “117” of Figure 6 is associated with a partial wall, rather than an opening as described in the specification. An amended version of Figure 6 showing the reference numeral “117” associated with an opening has been submitted with this amendment and response.

Claim 1 has been objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(d)(1) based on the use of the term “mounting portion.” In particular, the Examiner contends that a “mounting portion” as recited in claim 1 is not defined or shown in the specification or the drawings, and that it is not clear how the mounting portion and the mounting tab are distinguished. Claim 1 has been canceled, thus rendering this objection moot. To the extent this objection also applies to pending claim 34, Applicant respectfully notes that Figure 12 of the as-filed application shows a mating portion of the contact (103) as extending horizontally from the bend (131) and including the mounting tab (129).

Claim 25 has been objected to based on the use of the term “elements.” Claim 25 has been canceled, thus rendering this objection moot. Claim 34 has been objected to, although no basis for the objection has been set forth in the office action. Applicant respectfully requests clarification of the objection to claim 34.

Claims 1, 3-5, 9, 11-13 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Claims 1, 24-28, 30, and 32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Claims 2, 6-8, 10, 16-20, 22-24,

29, 31, and 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 1-13 and 15-33 have been canceled, thus rendering these rejections moot.

Claims 33-37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. patent no. 5,338,231 (“Wilhite”) in view of U.S. patent no. 56,241,535 (“Lemke”). Applicant respectfully submits that claims 34-37, as amended herein, are patentably distinct from the noted references for the following reasons, among others.

Claim 34 has been amended to recite a plurality of channels each extending substantially in a first direction, and the mounting tab contacting the housing so that the housing restrains the contact in the first direction. These features are believed to substantially isolate the fusible element (105) from the lateral (horizontal) force component acting on the contact (103) due to contact with the substrate (S2), and can thereby improve the service life of the fusible element 105. See, e.g., Figure 11 of the as-filed application. In other words, the noted features cause the horizontal force on the contact (103) to be reacted by the housing (101), rather than the fusible element (105).

Applicant respectfully submits that Wilhite and Lemke neither teach nor suggest a housing structure having a plurality of channels each extending substantially in a first direction, and a mounting tab contacting the housing so that the housing restrains a contact in the first direction. Applicant respectfully notes that the housing (12) of Wilhite does not restrain the solder tail portion (34) of the contact (14). See, e.g., Figure 4 of Wilhite. Rather, the Wilhite specification indicates that the contact (14) is restrained by the locking tab (36) and the locking aperture (42). Wilhite spec. at col. 3, lines 22-25.

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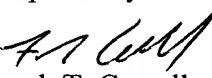
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Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) (and claims 35-37, which depend therefrom) is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and remarks.

Applicant believes that the foregoing comprises a full and complete response to the final rejection of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and early notice of allowance are earnestly solicited.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Respectfully submitted,


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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claims 1-13 and 15-33 have been canceled.

Claim 34 has been amended as follows:

34. (Amended) An electrical connector, comprising:

a housing having a retention structure, the housing structure having a plurality of channels each extending substantially in a first direction, a plurality of recesses, and a plurality of openings formed therein, each of the openings extending between a respective one of the channels and a respective one of the recesses; and

a plurality of contacts each mounted in a respective one of the channels, each of the contacts comprising:

a medial section;

a mounting portion extending from one end of the medial section and comprising a mounting tab, the mounting tab extending through a respective one of the openings and contacting the housing so that the housing restrains the contact in the first direction; and

a compressive mating portion extending from another end of said medial section and having a distal end, wherein the retention structure of said housing engages the distal ends of the compressive mating portions of the contacts to preload the contacts.